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ABSTRACT

This is an interim evaluation of a pilot program which utilized local farmers as program aides in cooperative extension education for small-farm operators. Specific objectives of this study were to determine the effectiveness of program aides in extension education in developing further the capacity of small-farm operators to take advantage of income opportunities available to them, and to identify activities performed by county extension staffs in support of program aides which could influence the socioeconomic development of small-farm operators in the pilot program. It was concluded that program aides helped to strengthen perceptions of most participants in the program and also played a major role in helping applicants apply for home improvement loans. The program was primarily production-oriented and increases in farm incomes for participants in four counties were much more than the added program cost in those counties. However, in some other counties little progress could be made. Recommendations for program improvements are included in this interim evaluation. (MF)

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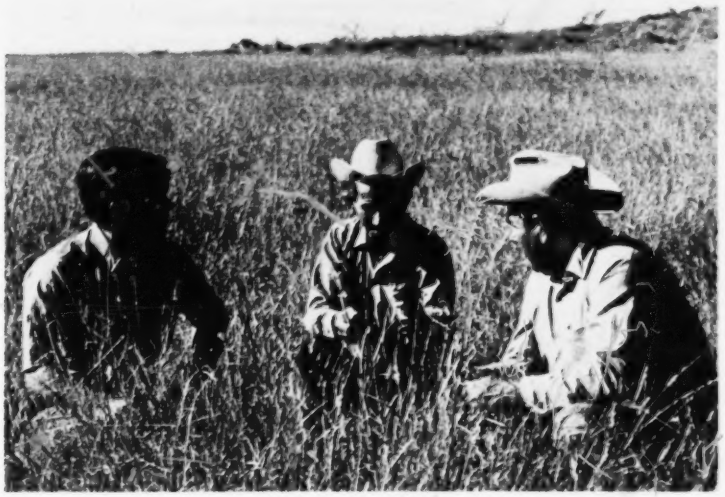
An Interim Evaluation



The Effectiveness of Nonprofessionals In Cooperative Extension Education

For Low-Income Farmers

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TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
THE TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
THE TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS

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An Interim Evaluation

The Effectiveness of Nonprofessionals in Cooperative Extension Education For Low-Income Farmers

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Acknowledgments

THIS REPORT represents a preliminary evaluation of a pilot program conducted by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service which utilized agricultural Program Aides in Cooperative Extension education for low-income farm families. This report does not attempt to evaluate any other program or agency related to the Extension pilot program.

The evaluation team wishes to express appreciation to the Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture for providing funds to support the evaluation and to the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station for providing the administrative and technical support necessary to conduct the research project.

The evaluation team is indebted to the administrative and program staffs of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service for their honesty and willingness to cooperate in the evaluation despite the disruption and increased workloads created by the evaluation. In addition, the authors are cognizant that without the full cooperation of farm operators participating in the pilot program, Program Aides and county Extension personnel, collection of the data for the evaluation would have been impossible.

Recognition also is extended to the numerous Extension specialists who helped provide background information about the day-to-day functioning of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service.

THIS IS an interim evaluation of a pilot program which utilized local farmers as Program Aides in Cooperative Extension education for small-farm operators. The program is currently in its second year of operation and will continue for at least one more year. Specific objectives of this study were (1) to determine the effectiveness of Program Aides in Extension education in developing further the capacity of small-farm operators to take advantage of income opportunities available to them, and (2) to identify activities performed by county Extension staffs in support of Program Aides which could influence the socioeconomic development of small-farm operators in the pilot program.

The term "nonprofessional" which has been utilized in many educational programs to describe persons employed as Program Aides is somewhat misleading because the term applies more to formal levels of educational attainment than ability or knowledge displayed by the individual employed. That is, the Program Aide may not have the formal education required to be employed as a professional in educational work, but he possesses the field experience and knowledge to an extent that he can serve as a valuable source of information in an educational program. Since the terms "nonprofessional" and "Program Aide" do not appear interchangeable, this report will refer to those programs employed in a program assistant category as "Program Aides."

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Although Program Aides have proved to be quite useful in the fields of public health and nutrition, evidence of successful use of Program Aides in agricultural Extension education is lacking. Because there has been no relevant research and because of a growing interest in the use of agricultural Program Aides, Extension Service, USDA provided a research grant of Special Needs funds to the Texas Agricultural Extension Service to help support an evaluation of the effectiveness of Program Aides in Cooperative Extension education for low-income farmers. The Texas Agricultural Extension Service requested the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology at Texas A&M University to conduct the evaluation.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Agriculture in the United States has developed as rapidly as any comparable activity in history and perhaps is more highly mechanized than in any nation today. This rapid development has been achieved largely through the diffusion process whereby new farm technology developed by agricultural research scientists is communicated to farm operators.

TIAP

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Cooperative Extension has fulfilled an important role in helping farm operators adopt new technology and to increase production and efficiency. However, a review of research findings indicates that persons with low incomes, small farms and low educational attainment utilize much less the services offered by government agricultural agencies such as Cooperative Extension than do persons with higher incomes, larger farms and higher educational attainment. One result of small-farm operators' lack of utilization of agency services is that many of these farm families are not keeping abreast of new technology, and thus are earning less from their farming operations.

A comparison of farm operators in Texas for 1964 and 1969, presented in Table 1, page 7, indicates that while the average value from the sale of farm products in 1969 was $15,418, an increase of 42 percent per farm from 1964, the number of farms grossing less than $10,000 increased by 2.3 percent.

A People and a Spirit (1968) said that in serving the poor, Extension faces the problem of providing sufficient incentive for participation by individuals and groups who in the past were not highly motivated toward, or who were denied, the educational process — formal or informal. This report stated that lack of motivation often resulted from a lack of knowledge about the opportunities to participate in Extension programs. Further, Extension has a challenge and an opportunity in providing more adequate information to nonparticipants about its programs and their benefits — a goal requiring

more intensive personal contact by Extension agents.

Because of the uniqueness of the Extension organization and the service it renders, a tremendous demand already has been placed on Extension agents by persons who recognize a need for these services. To provide additional services to an expanded audience on an individual basis not only will require additional manpower but also may call for a new type of Extension agent.

To resolve this dilemma and to meet its obligation of providing educational assistance to small-farm operators, the Texas Agricultural Extension Service organized a pilot program in 1969 entitled the *Intensified Farm Planning Program*. This program, referred to as "Texas IFPP," utilized local farmers as Program Aides in Cooperative Extension education for small-farm operators on an intensive basis to help develop the capacity of small-farm families to take advantage of socioeconomic opportunities available to them.

IFPP

CHAPTER II

DEVELOPMENT OF TEXAS INTENSIFIED FARM PLANNING PROGRAM

IN THE SUMMER of 1968, an Extension study committee of 12 members representing a cross-section of agricultural subject-matter specialists was appointed by the Director of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service to design an Extension program that would accelerate educational assistance to small-farm operators in Texas.

The committee recommended that local farmers be employed as Program Aides in working with farm operators in the lower income level. The committee's view was that farmers who live in the community and are themselves in the lower income level should have more effective communication with small-farm operators than would professional agricultural agents, and thus, might be more successful in bringing about recommended changes.

TEXAS IFPP OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the Texas IFPP were:

1. To demonstrate the effectiveness of the Program Aide in working with small-farm operators on an intensive basis to effect change in production agriculture and management practices.

2. To provide county staffs an opportunity to field test program procedures, teaching methods and techniques which could be drawn upon to strengthen an educational program designed to assist operators of small-farm units.

SELECTION OF COUNTIES

The study committee recommended that only counties in which county Extension agents showed a definite interest in this type of program be selected to participate because it would require more time and effort on the part of the agents than other types of educational activities. The study committee suggested that the following conditions would enhance the probability of a successful program:

1. A complete county staff.

2. A county staff that approves of Extension's concern for the plight of operators of small farms.

3. A county staff that has a favorable attitude toward Extension's objectives of helping operators of small farms.

4. A county staff that is able to define and agree on the target audience.

5. That members of the county staff agree to the extent resources are to be committed to this effort.

6. That members of the county staff agree on responsibilities for planning, initiating, executing and evaluating work.

Based on the criteria identified by the study committee, ten counties were selected to participate in this pilot program. They were as follows: Lamar, Red River, Cherokee, Freestone, Falls, Milam, Lee, Washington, Guadalupe, and Starr; figure 1.

The 1969 Census of Agriculture for Texas was used to provide socioeconomic data for the ten selected counties. Comparison of these counties and the state, presented in Table 2, showed that the average-size farm for the ten county area was smaller than the state average. The mean income from the sale of farm products for the state as a whole was more than two times higher than the mean farm income for participating counties. Finally, the percentage of farmers reporting off-farm work and the average age of farmers in participating counties were slightly higher than the state average.

SELECTION OF PROGRAM AIDES

The study committee recommended that upon notification of being selected as a pilot county in the Texas IFPP, each county staff should recommend a minimum of three applicants for agricultural Program Aide positions to be considered by the district agricultural agent.[1]

[1] *The Texas Agricultural Extension Service is divided into 13 districts and the agricultural supervisor of each district is entitled district agricultural agent.*

Fig. 1. Counties participating in the Texas Intensified Farm Planning Program.

Criteria recommended for selection of Program Aides include:

1. Sincere desire to improve his own situation.

2. Appropriate background, including literacy and practical farming experiences with enterprises common to area.

3. Sincerce desire to work with other farmers to aid them in improving their economic position.

4. Ability and willingness to accept and understand necessary training to be able to inspire, motivate and teach others.

5. Evidence of leadership abilities.

6. Resident of the county.

PROGRAM AIDE CHARACTERISTICS

Eleven agricultural Program Aides were selected in March 1969, to serve in ten counties on a pilot basis in the Texas IFPP. Nine counties employed full-time aides (40-hour work week) and one county employed two Program Aides on half-time basis (20-hour work week).

Characteristics of the aides at the time of selection are given in Table 3, page 7. The median age of the group was 41.5 and the range was from 24 to 59. All had some agricultural experience and one was a college graduate.

Table 1. A comparison of Texas farms by economic classification for 1969 and 1964.

Economic classification (Value of product sold)	% farmers		Av. value per farm		% change in av. value
	1969	1964	1969	1964	
I ($40,000 or more)	6.3	5.7			
II ($20,000 to $39,999)	7.5	7.2			
III ($10,000 to $19,999)	10.2	9.8			
IV ($5,000 to $9,999)	13.5	11.4			
V ($2,500 to $4,999)	19.0	12.8			
VI ($50 to $2,499)	7.6	11.9			
VII (Part-time)[a]	25.6	25.1			
VIII (Part-retirement)[b]	10.2	26.1			
TOTALS	213,550	205,110	$15,418	$10,848	+42

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce 1964 and 1969 Agricultural Census, State and Counties. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office.

[a]Farms with a value of sales of farm products of $50 to $2,499 were classified as "part-time" by the Census of Agriculture if the operator was under 65 years of age and if he worked off the farm 100 or more days (p.A13).

[b]Farms with a value of sales of farm products of $50 to $2,499 were classified as "part-retirement" if the farm operator was 65 years old or over (p.A13).

SELECTION OF COOPERATORS

In the selection of farm operators, the study committee suggested that farms selected be representative of small farms of the area and that the target audience be composed primarily of persons who were not active participants of ongoing Extension education programs. The Extension study committee also recommended that the Texas IFPP be blended into the ongoing Extension program rather than creating an isolated program. The specific criteria for selection of farm operators were:

1. Cooperators would be operators of small farms who generally are not active participants in Extension's ongoing educational programs.

2. Cooperators should be farmers who receive a major portion of their income from the farm operation.

3. First priority given to those operators who gross less than $5,000 per year from their farming operation.

4. Second priority given to those who gross between $5,000 and $7,500 per year from their farming operation.

5. Third priority given to those who gross between $7,500 and $10,000 per year from their farming operation.

Table 2. Selected socioeconomic characteristics of all farm operators in ten counties participating in Texas IFPP and in Texas.

Socioeconomic characteristic	10 counties in Texas IFPP	Texas
No. farms	15,048	213,550
Av. size per farm (acres)	284.3	667.6
Mean income from sale of farm products ($)	6,988	15,418
Percent farmers reporting off-farm work	50.9	47.0
Mean age of farmers	54.0	52.7

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce 1969 Agricultural Census, State and Counties. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office. County data, Texas, pp. 1-1920.

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

A total of 224 farm operators initially were designated as cooperators in the Texas IFPP. However, there were persons who were not selected to be in the program who requested and received assistance from Program Aides.

As can be seen from the selected socioeconomic data of the target audience shown in Table 4, the average age of the cooperating farmers at the beginning of the program was 54 years. The average farm size was 121 acres of which 100 acres were utilized for pasture-

Table 3. Selected characteristics of agricultural program aides participating in Texas IFPP.

Characteristic	No.
Age	
24 - 35	3
36 - 45	3
46 - 55	3
56 - 59	2
Education	
Less than high-school diploma	1
High-school diploma	6
One or 2 years of college	3
College graduate	1
Farm experience	
Farm owner	7
Farm operator	2
Some farm experience	2

Table 4. Socioeconomic characteristics of participants cooperating in Texas IFPP, 1968.

County	No. farmers in program	Av. age	Av. size of farm	Mean income from sale of farm products	No. reporting off farm employment
Cherokee	23	59	75	$ 903	15
Falls	15	57	85	2,695	2
Freestone	27	56	148	1,463	24
Guadalupe	17	55	225	3,916	9
Lamar	20	50	92	1,707	16
Lee	20	56	108	1,277	11
Milam	18	55	103	1,044	12
Red River	28	59	78	1,349	19
Starr	29	48	213	2,510	16
Washington	27	51	77	1,966	17
TOTALS	224	54[a]	121[a]	$1,828[a]	141

[a]Weighted average

land and 19 acres for cultivation. The mean income from the sale of farm products for participants in 1968 was $1,828. In comparison with data presented in Table 2, the participants cooperating in the Texas IFPP were about the same age as nonparticipants but had much smaller operations than the average for the ten-county area as calculated in 1964. In addition, participants cooperating in the program earned nearly 42 percent less than nonparticipants from the sale of farm products. Percentage of participants who reported off-farm work also increased.

STATE COORDINATOR

Having accepted the recommendations of the study committee, the Director of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service appointed a coordinator to provide program leadership for the Texas IFPP and perform these duties:

1. Coordinate training for the county agricultural Extension staffs and the agricultural Program Aides in the selected counties in cooperation with district agricultural agents.

2. Assist technical subject-matter specialists in planning and developing educational materials to be used by agricultural Program Aides.

3. Make periodic visits to pilot counties when requested by the district agricultural agents to assist county agricultural staffs, agricultural Program Aides and participants in planning, implementing and evaluating the effectiveness of the IFPP.

4. Assist in coordinating the preparation of necessary program materials.

5. Review reports periodically and suggest any needed changes.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE TEXAS IFPP

In April 1969, the Texas IFPP was initiated with an orientation program conducted by the state coordinator at Texas A&M University. Additional training programs for Program Aides and participating county staffs were conducted in the Fall of 1969, 1970 and 1971.

SUMMARY

The Texas IFPP was initiated in April 1969, on a pilot basis as a result of recommendations by the Extension study committee to the Director of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. Ten counties and 224 farm operators were initially selected. However, evidence indicates that the program is serving a much larger audience. Reliable information is not available at this time to account for all those who have been served by this program.

THE TEXAS IFPP was initiated in April 1969, and the evaluation team was selected in January 1970. This time lapse had some influence on the direction taken in the evaluation.

COLLECTION OF DATA

Several procedures were utilized for collecting information to be used in the evaluation. First, bench-mark information was collected on each participant when he entered the program. The year 1968 was defined as the bench-mark year. Second, during the second year a questionnaire was administered to each participant to obtain information similar to that collected in the bench-mark year. Third, field interviews were conducted to record personal observations of the cooperating farm operators. Further discussion of techniques used in personal interviews is presented in Chapter IV.

The interviewing team planned an initial visit and two follow-up visits for those not contacted on previous visits. This procedure enabled the research team to interview 70 percent of the farm operators cooperating in the Texas IFPP. An anlysis of bench-mark data which had been collected on each of the 224 participants when they enrolled in the program satisfied the research team that subjective responses provided from those interviewed were not likely to differ from those not interviewed.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVES

The first objective was to determine the effectiveness of the Program Aide in Agricultural Extension in developing the capacity of small-farm operators to utilize income opportunities available to them. The second objective was to identify the activities performed by county staffs in support of Program Aides which could influence the socioeconomic development of the participants.

It was postulated that through personal visits certain activities of Program Aides in the Texas IFPP would expedite the socioeconomic development of participants. In addition, certain activities of support personnel also were postulated to have an influence on the socioeconomic development of participants. Activities of Program Aides were used in reference to the first objective. Activities of support personnel were used in reference to the second objective.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

PROGRAM AIDE ACTIVITIES

The activities of the Program Aides were evaluated in terms of:

1. *Changes in perceptions.* If Program Aides are effective in communicating with participating farm operators about educational assistance provided by Extension Service, farm operators should have a positive increase in perceptions of the service and assistance programs offered.

2. *Increased acceptance of educational assistance.* This is one anticipated result of the strengthened perceptions of participants and would include participation in formal ongoing programs of Extension Service; acceptance of services of USDA agencies such as ASCS,[1] FHA[2] and SCS:[3] and a willingness to accept information provided by Program Aides during farm visits.

3. *Changes in production methods and techniques.* It is assumed that educational activities would be planned specifically for each participant and that recommendations could be logically accepted or implemented by participating operators. Thus, increased acceptance of educational assistance was expected to result in adoption of recommended practices and procedures in production, marketing and utilization of services of available USDA agencies.

4. *Increased gross income.* Adoption of recommended practices and procedures should normally reflect increases in income from the sale of farm products.

5. *Awareness of opportunities for changes in level of living.* Increases in income and awareness of opportunities for improvement should

[1] *ASCS represents Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service. Purpose: (1) Restrict food surpluses, (2) maintain farm prices, (3) pay farmers to adopt soil-conserving practices.*

[2] *FHA represents Farmers Home Administration. Purpose: Provide loans and farm management to low-income farmers.*

[3] *SCS represents Soil Conservation Service. Purpose: Provide technical assistance and obtain the adoption of soil conservation practices.*

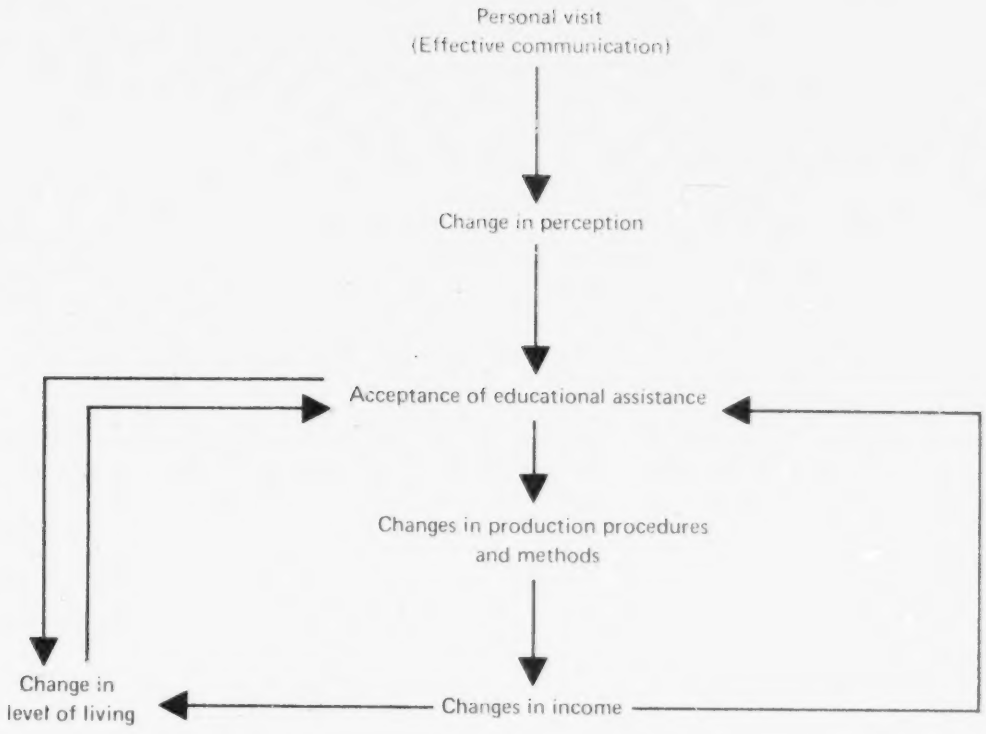

Fig. 2. Selected Program Aide activities for socioeconomic development of cooperators participating in the Texas IFPP.

permit farm operators who are not satisfied with levels of living to improve them.

A visual presentation of the activities of Program Aides is shown in figure 2. The influential factor in this model is the effectiveness of communication between Program Aides and participants. This model assumes that all production practices and procedures recommended by Program Aides are economically feasible and suitable for adoption by the participants.

ACTIVITIES OF TEXAS IFPP

Activities of county Extension staffs were evaluated in terms of:

1. *Selection of a target audience.* How was it selected? What were the strengths and weaknesses of the selection process?

2. *Determination of individual needs of the target audience.* What problems were worked on and why were they selected?

3. *Formulation of goals — immediate, intermediate and ultimate.* What types of goals were formulated? Were goals formulated in cooperation with individual participants or were participants unaware of these goals?

4. *Identification and coordination of internal and external resources to assist program participants.* What were the resources utilized to help participants and Program Aides reach desired objectives?

The questions listed above provided a guideline for determining the contributions made by county Extension staffs in support of the Texas IFPP.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

PROGRAM AIDE ACTIVITIES

The first phase of the analysis is concerned with activities of Program Aides, as described in Chapter III. Personal visits with participating farmers by Program Aides were the primary methods utilized to reach designated goals. Contacts were frequent; the work was intensive.

Changes in Perceptions

The measurement of perceptions of farmers participating in the Texas IFPP of services offered by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service was accomplished through the use of a self-anchoring scale (Kilpatrick and Cantril, 1960). A self-anchoring scale is one in which each participant is asked to describe, in terms of his own perceptions, goals and values, the top and bottom, or anchoring points, of the dimension on which scale measurement is desired, and then to employ this self-defined continuum as a measuring device.

For this evaluation, each participant was first asked to describe the type of assistance provided to him by the Extension Service. Then each participant was asked to dscribe the most effective type of assistance provided by the Extension Service. Finally he was asked to describe the least effective type of assistance provided by the Extension Service.

Table 5. Percent distribution of participants by responses describing types of assistance offered by Extension Service.

Type of assistance	% N=156
Information of a general nature	69.9
Information about participation in governmental assistance programs	10.9
Information on specific enterprises	0.4
No contact with Extension Service	5.1
Encouragement	2.6
Youth work	1.3
Do not know	3.8

Table 6. Percent distribution of participants by responses of most effective types of assistance offered by Extension Service.

Most effective types of assistance	% N=156
Personal advice	32.1
Information about participation in governmental assistance programs	23.1
Farm visits	17.3
Help on specific enterprises	11.5
Conduct group meetings	3.2
Encouragement	1.9
Soil test	1.3
Other	1.9
Do not know	7.7

The various descriptions of the types of assistance provided by the Extension Service are presented in Table 5. Nearly 70 percent said that the Extension Service was a source for information of a general nature. Participants in this category could not recall having previously utilized regularly the assistance of the Extension Service on any specific production problems. However, the participants in this category believed that they could call on the Extension Service for information to resolve specific production problems when the need arose. Nearly 11 percent said that the Extension Service represented a source of information about types of assistance offered by various state and federal governmental agencies. Six percent utilized the Extension Service on a regular basis for information while about five percent said they had no contact with the Extension Service.

Responses of the most effective types of assistance provided by Extension Service are shown in Table 6. Nearly a third of the participants believed that personal advice was the most effective assistance Extension Service could provide, while nearly a fourth said that information about enrollment in governmental assistance programs was most effective.

About a sixth of the participants ranked farm visits as the most effective type of assistance offered by the Extension Service and three percent believed group meetings were most effective.

Of the least effective types of assistance the Extension Service could provide, findings in Table 7 indicated that neglect in providing requested information was ranked first by over half of the participants. Ten percent of the participants stated that the Extension Service did not offer any assistance that could be classified as most ineffective because those who did provide

Table 7. Percent distribution of participants by responses of least effective types of assistance offered by Extension Service

Least effective type of assistance	% N=156
Ignore requested assistance	57.7
Extension Service has no bad methods	11.5
No farm visits	10.3
Other	1.3
Do not know	19.2

ineffective assistance would have their employment terminated. About ten percent believed that termination of farm visits would be the least effective type of assistance Extension Service could provide. Finally, about a fifth of the participants could not list a most ineffective type of assistance.

After having described his views of the Extension Service, a non-verbal scale (ten-point ladder scale), figure 3, was handed to the participant and he was told that the most effective and the least effective types of assistance provided by the Extension Service which he had just described were the end points of the scale, with the most effective at the top and the least effective at the bottom.

Each participant was then asked to indicate on the ten-point ladder scale how effective the types of assistance provided by the Extension Service were to him at the present time. The number provided by the participant was recorded. Two additional questions were asked and their numbers recorded: "How effective was the assistance provided to you by Extension Service five years ago?" and "How effective will the assistance provided to you by Extension Service be five years from now?"

With respect to placement on the ladder of the effectiveness of the Extension Service, the ratings are presented in Table 8.

Table 8. Distribution of 156 participants by ratings of services offered by Texas Agricultural Extension Service.

Rating	Time period		
	5 years ago	Present	5 years from now
	%	%	%
0 - 2	47	11	3
3 - 8	28	38	25
9 - 10	25	51	72
Total	100	100	100

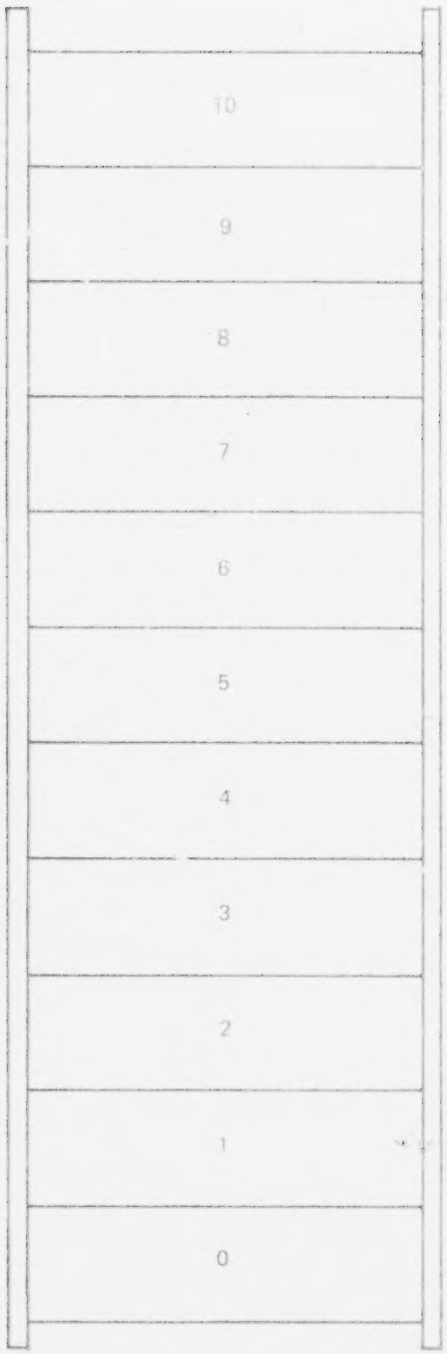

Fig. 3. The ladder scale.

A fourth of the participants interviewed rated the assistance provided by Extension Service for the time period of 5 years ago above eight on the ten-point ladder scale. In contrast,

nearly twice as many participants (47 percent) rated Extension assistance below two for that same time period. After one year in Texas IFPP (the present time period), half of those interviewed rated Extension assistance above eight on the ten-point scale while only about a tenth rated Extension assistance below two.

As to future expectations, nearly three-fourths of those interviewed expected the assistance provided five years hence to be above eight while less than three percent expected future assistance to be below two on the ten-point scale. Thus, it appears that the Texas IFPP effectively communicates with its clientele.

Acceptance of Educational Assistance

Measurement of acceptance of formal educational assistance was obtained by determining the number of participants (1) who participated in educational programs conducted by the Extension Service and (2) who utilized the services of selected USDA agencies. Measurement of attendance at Extension meetings excluded those who could not attend formal programs because of previous commitments and those who attended ongoing Extension programs where attendance records were not kept.

Attendance records were kept for nine types of educational programs conducted in the ten-county area for participants in the Texas IFPP in 1970. Similar types of programs were conducted in previous years in the ten-county area but usually were not designed specifically for low-income clientele as were the programs in 1970. Table 9 shows the attendance of participants at meetings for 1968 and 1970.

As indicated in Table 9, less than two percent of the participants in the Texas IFPP attended an Extension meeting in 1968. In contrast, over a fourth of the participants attended an Extension meeting in 1970. This suggests that with encouragement audiences from the lower income levels will attend formal Extension meetings.

Table 9. Percentage distribution of 224 participants by number of Extension meetings attended, 1968 and 1970.

Year	No. meetings attended			
	None	One	Two	Three
	%			
1968	98.7	1.3	0	0
1970	73.7	17.9	7.1	1.3

Table 10. Distribution of 224 participants by participation in assistance programs offered by selected USDA agencies, 1968 and 1970.

Agency	1968 No.	1970 No.	% change
Soil Conservation Service	29	79	172
Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service	43	129	200
Farmers Home Administration	11	58	427

A measure of the acceptance of services of selected USDA agencies was accomplished by determining the number of participants who utilized these services in the bench-mark year and in 1970. As indicated in Table 10, participation in programs by participants increased two-fold, threefold and fivefold for the three agencies respectively.

In some counties, considerable evidence indicated a cooperative effort between the Program Aides and governmental agencies to provide services to those participating in this program. One reason which may have enabled inter-agency cooperation was the flexibility of the Program Aide's role. The Program Aide served as a coordinator by presenting information about services of governmental agencies to participants and showed how the services of the agencies could benefit them. In addition, Program Aides often introduced participants to agency representatives and even helped interpret eligibility requirements. Conversely, some agency representatives explained to their clients the benefits of participating in the Texas IFPP.

Changes in Production

An increase in acceptance of educational assistance by participating farm operators was expected to be accompanied by an increase in the number of participants who adopted recommended farm practices.

Practices included were selected after conferences with specialists in various fields. An examination of data collected indicated that participants managed the following enterprises: beef cattle, swine, corn, cotton, grain sorghum, peanuts, watermelons, peas, cucumbers, potatoes, tomatoes and cantaloupe. To make comparisons, data are presented only for enterprises that participants had for 1968 and 1970. Thus, methods

Table 11. Distribution of participants in corn production by acreages, yields and production practices, 1968 and 1970.

	1968 No.	1970 No.	% change
No. participants in corn production	76	76	
Av. number of acres per farm in corn production	10.8	8.8	−18
Av. yield per acre (bu.)	23.0	35.0	+52
Farmers following recommended production practices			
Land preparation	37	56	+51.4
Variety planted	35	51	+45.7
Seed planting rate	36	55	+52.8
Fertilization application	21	35	+66.7
Weed control	32	32	

compared are for corn, beef cattle and truck crops.[1]

Corn production. Thirty-four percent of the participants planted corn, most of which was fed to on-farm livestock. Table 11 shows that the average yield per farm increased by more than 50 percent, while the average acreage in corn was reduced by 18 percent. One reason for the decrease in acreage in 1970 may be that inclement weather at planting time delayed planting dates and reduced the amount of time permitted for planting.

There were sizable increases in the number of participants following recommendations for land preparation, variety planted, seed planting rates and fertilizer application. These increases may help account for the 52 percent increase in yield.

The number who followed recommendations for weed control decreased slightly. One explanation is that the inclement weather which may have reduced corn acreages may have also increased soil moisture, thus enabling grasses and weeds to become established and more difficult to control.

Truck crop production. Forty percent of the participants planted truck crops in 1968 and 1970. However, acreage and yields for 1968 could not be determined adequately. The number of participants following recommendations increased for each of the selected practices from 1968 to 1970. However, evidence indicated that some participants were skeptical about adopting recommendations unless a more permanent vegetable market was established. Hence, any future changes in numbers who adopt recommendations in a given time period may be smaller.

Livestock production. More than 90 percent of the participants had beef cattle enterprises for both 1968 and 1970. Table 13 shows a five percent increase in calf-crop production and an 80 percent increase in the number of acres in improved pastureland. There were sizeable increases in the number following production recommendations in 1970 as compared to 1968. Almost three-fourths of the participants did not follow any of the recommended practices in 1968. Although large increases in numbers following recommendations did occur from 1968 to 1970, more than half of the participants had not adopted recommended practices by 1970.

Changes in Gross Farm Income

Farm income was divided into two categories — income from sale of livestock and income from sale of crops. Sources for livestock income were

Table 12. Distribution of participants by selected truck crop production practices for 1968 and 1970.

	1968 No.	1970 No.	% change
No. participants having truck crops	89	89	
No. following recommended production practices			
Land preparation	49	70	+42.9
Variety planted	70	76	+ 8.6
Seed planting rate	57	70	+22.8
Fertilizer application	38	54	+42.1
Weed control	44	58	+31.8

[1]*Because so many different vegetables were planted in such small quantities by participants in both 1968 and 1970, they were combined into one enterprise, truck crops, for a more meaningful analysis.*

Table 13. Distribution of participants by calf-crop percentage, acres in pastureland and by practices for 1968 and 1970.

	1968 No.	1970 No.	% change
No. participants in beef cattle production	203	203	
No. of cattle	2,548	2,787	+ 9.4
Calf-crop percentage	78.5	82.6	+ 5.2
Acres in pastureland	22,131	22,624	+ 2.2
Unimproved	19,726	18,284	− 7.3
Improved	2,405	4,340	+ 80.5
No. participants following recommended production[1] practices			
Utilize recommended bull for breeding purposes	55	90	+ 63.6
Vaccination practices	48	79	+ 64.6
External parasite control	48	81	+ 68.8
Internal parasite control	17	52	+205.9

calf and pig production. Sources of crop income included tomatoes, grain sorghum, cotton, peas, cucumbers, peanuts, watermelons, potatoes, cantaloupes and corn. Farm incomes in Table 14 indicated that participants' income from sale of livestock increased by almost $58,000 from 1968 to 1970, or almost 25 percent per participant. Income from the sale of crops increased $700 or about 0.6 percent per participant.

Several reasons could account for the increase in livestock income: first, improved pastures enabled producers to expand the size of their herds; second, herd expansion and improved self-crop percentages meant more calves available for market; third, an increase in the number of participants adopting recommended practices led to improved quality and conformity of market calves; fourth, higher prices were received at market.

In reference to the slight increase in crop income, acreage devoted to corn production was considerably less in 1970 than 1968 and this may be true for other crops as well. In addition, inconsistent vegetable markets may have reduced vegetable prices and thus reduced crop incomes.

Level of Living

The final measure of accomplishment was change in level of living of farm operators participating in the Texas IFPP. Table 15 represents a level of living check list of items generally considered essential for most families. While 99 percent of the program participants had electricity in 1968, about half of the participants had neither running water piped into their homes nor telephones. One reason for the proportion of participants not having running water in their homes may be the large investment required for drilling water wells in some counties.

Table 15. Distribution of 224 participants by level of living index items for 1968 and 1970.

Index item	1968 No.	1970 No.	% change
Electricity in home	222	223	
Cold running water piped into home	113	134	+18.6
Hot running water piped into home	92	114	+23.9
Refrigerator	216	219	+ 1.0
Telephone	116	124	+ 6.9
Radio	211	218	+ 3.3
Television	170	188	+10.6

In comparing changes between 1968 and 1970, there was an increase of nearly 19 percent in the number of participants who had cold running water piped into the home and an increase of nearly 25 percent having hot running water. The number having telephones increased by about seven percent. One reason for the increase in the number of participants having running water piped into the home may be the increase in the number of communities applying for and receiving FHA loans to develop community water systems. This appears to be more economically feasible than individual wells.

COUNTY EXTENSION STAFF ACTIVITIES

This section of the analysis is concerned with the activities performed by county Extension staffs in support of the Texas IFPP as described in Chapter III.

Selection of Target Audience

Each of the ten counties in the pilot program utilized similar methods for selecting participants for the Texas IFPP. First, a small-farm advisory committee of representatives from USDA agencies, private businessmen and local farmers were asked to nominate farm operators

Table 14. Gross farm incomes of participants in Texas IFPP, 1968 and 1970.

	Source of income	
	Livestock	Crops
No. participants	209	102
Farm income in 1968	$232,267	$110,381
Mean farm income	1,111	1,082
Farm income in 1970	290,188	111,088
Mean farm income	1,389	1,089
Amount of change	+$ 57,921	+$ 707
Percent change per participants	+ 24.9	+ 0.64

Table 16. Farm incomes of 224 participants in Texas IFPP for 1968.

Gross farm income in 1968	No. farmers	% farm operators
0-299	15	6.7
300-999	83	37.0
1000-1999	68	30.4
2000-2999	21	9.4
3000-4999	21	9.4
5000-7999	7	3.1
8000-9999	6	2.7
10,000+	3	1.3

who qualified for this program. Each Extension county staff then compiled a list of farm operators to be called by the Program Aide and/or the professional agent. The program was explained to the farmers and their cooperation was solicited. The response was good with less than five percent declining to cooperate. In addition, about half who declined to cooperate later requested that they be included in the program.

As stated previously in this report, priority in the selection of the target audience was given to farm operators who grossed less than 5,000 per year from the farming operation. The economic data contained in Table 16 revealed that nearly 93 percent of the target audience grossed less than $5,000 in 1968 (the bench-mark year).

While the selection process was based upon the criteria recommended by the Extension study committee, it should be recognized that an educational program in production agriculture sometimes develops rather slowly. The returns realized from the educational investment are affected by external forces beyond the control of the educational program, such as age, health and production potential of the target audience. Thus returns may not be as high as one would expect them to be.[1]

Needs of Target Audience

County Extension staffs were charged with identifying strengths and limitations of the participating farm operators. These included their aspirations, expectations, farming ability, available resources and production and marketing problems. Program procedure called for each county staff to review available information on participating farmers so that appropriate goals could be formulated. Other resource personnel were to be called upon to give advice and make recommendations.

The value of the Program Aides became quite apparent during this activity because the informal visits with farm operators by Program Aides helped most county staffs identify problems that farm operators would have hesitated to discuss with professional staffs. It is axiomatic that unless problems are accurately determined, solutions may be long in coming. The following example may better illustrate this point.

[1]*For further discussion, see Recommendation 1, p. 21.*

The Program Aide in Falls County believed that efficient tomato production was dependent not only on utilization of recommended production procedures but also upon a dependable local tomato market. Therefore, the aide's primary efforts in the beginning of the Texas IFPP were to induce vegetable buyers to establish a vegetable shed in Falls County. Potential buyers were reluctant to establish sheds in the area because of a previous history of lack of quality, quantity and continuity of production. However, one buyer finally agreed to establish a temporary shed in Falls County. The Program Aide then turned his efforts to that of tomato production and convinced cooperating farmers that by following prescribed recommendations they could produce a quality tomato that could be sold locally. Table 17 reflects tomato production in 1968 and 1970 for Falls County farmers participating in the Texas IFPP.

With the exception of insect control, most participants followed recommendations for all practices in 1968. While none utilized recommended practices for insect control in 1968, five of the eight producers followed insecticide recommendations in 1970. The average farmer increased tomato production acreage from 4 to 6 acres for the 2-year period and yields by 62 percent.

Total income from sale of all crops for participants in Falls County increased by 64 percent from 1968 to 1970. As stated earlier, Falls County established a dependable market outlet by which producers could sell their products. This market outlet had a major impact on tomato production in Falls County in 1970.

Table 17. Tomato production practices, yields, acreages, and total crop income for Falls County participants in Texas IFPP for 1968 and 1970.

	1968 No.	1970 No.	% change
Tomato production practice N = 8			
No. following recommendations			
Land preparation	6	7	+17
Planting date	7	7	0
Fertilizer application	4	5	+25
Weed control	5	5	0
Insect control	0	5	
Av. acreage in tomato production per farm	4.2	6.2	+48
Av. yield per acre in boxes	127	206	+62
Total gross income from sale of all crops N=14	$23,424	$38,404	+64
Av. gross crop income per farm	$ 1,673	$ 2,743	+64

Formulation of Goals

This evaluation determined that meaningful, long- and short-range goals often were insufficiently defined. While each of the county Extension staffs had goals in mind for the participants and often had farm plans recorded, evidence indicated that effective communication was lacking in some counties for some participants. This was particularly true for Program Aides who did not know participants personally before the program started and thus had limited personal insights into personal characteristics of participants. Creditability was also a factor. That is, information of a specific nature offered at a proper point in the decision-making process by Program Aides usually resulted in relatively quick application of recommendations. On the other hand, general information at the particular points in the decision-making process usually resulted in a wait-and-see approach by participants.

One county which provided specific plans of action at crucial points in the decision-making process was Freestone County. The overall goal of Freestone County was to increase farm income of participants by improving pastures and cow-calf operations. Since capital was a limiting factor affecting pasture improvement, the Freestone County Program Aide attempted to utilize, as fully as possible, the funds provided by the ASCS in the form of agricultural conservation payments. This amounted to about 80 percent of the cost incurred by participants for improvement of pastures.

Table 18 shows that significant changes occurred in each of the selected production practices. In 1968, for example, less than five percent of the participants utilized recommended veterinary practices for internal and external parasite control. This increased to 88.8 percent in 1970. In addition, the number of cooperators who utilized recommended bulls for breeding purposes increased 400 percent. Finally, the average cooperator in Freestone County increased his income from the sale of livestock by 48 percent.

Table 18. Livestock inventory, acreage in improved pasture, production practices and livestock income for 27 participants in Freestone County, 1968 and 1970.

	1968 No.	1970 No.	% change
Livestock inventory			
No. of cows	389	425	+ 9
Calf-crop percentage	76	86	+ 12
No. calves sold	273	334	+ 22
No. bulls	22	28	+ 27
Acres of improved pasture	10	277	+2670
Beef cattle production practices No. following recommendations			
Good breeding bull	3	15	+ 400
Regular vaccination practices	1	25	+2300
External parasite control	1	24	+2200
Internal parasite control	1	25	+2300
Gross livestock income	$29,407	$43,567	+ 48
Av. per participant	$ 1,089	$ 1,614	+ 48

Table 19. Utilization of USDA agencies by 29 participants in Texas IFPP in Starr County, 1968 and 1970.

Agency	No. participants who utilized selected agencies 1968	1970
Soil Conservation Service	0	4
Farmers Home Administration	0	26
Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service	0	22

The Program Aide in Freestone County established a farm plan for each participant which guided him in providing specific information to participants at crucial points in the decision-making process. In addition, the Program Aide demonstrated to participants how adoption of particular recommendations would enable participants to obtain production goals.

Allocation of Resources

The fourth responsibility of support personnel was to determine external resources which could be used to help Program Aides and participants reach goals formulated at previous stages of the program. External resources included private lending agencies, FHA, ASCS, SCS and agricultural Extension specialists.

Response of business leaders and state and local governmental agencies to Texas IFPP was quite favorable. Most agreed to cooperate in any way possible and were called upon to help provide planning and action.

In Starr County, for example, the county ASCS Committee voted to put aside a portion of its agricultural conservation payment funds for low-income farmers who had not previously taken advantage of the funds for pasture development. The Program Aide went to each participant and explained that the funds were available from the government which would pay up to 80 percent of the cost of removing brush and planting recommended varieties of improved grasses.

Table 20. Livestock inventory, acreage in improved pasture, production practices and livestock income for 26 participants in Starr County, 1968 and 1970.

	1968 No.	1970 No.	% change
Livestock inventory			
No. cows on hand	375	455	+ 21
Calf-crop percentage	80	92	+ 15
No. calves sold	255	368	+ 44
No. bulls on hand	22	21	− 5
Acres of improved pastures	119	1,040	+774
Production practices			
No. following recommendations			
Good breeding bull	4	9	+125
Regular vaccination practices	3	4	+ 33
External parasite control	2	3	+ 50
Internal parasite control	2	2	
Gross livestock income	$26,380	$41,027	+ 55
Av. per participant	$ 1,014	$ 1,578	+ 55

Table 19 shows that where none of the participants in Starr County utilized the services offered by the selected USDA agencies in 1968, significant numbers availed themselves of these services in 1970. Three-fourths of the participants made use of conservation payments provided through ASCS to improve pastures by clearing brush and planting improved grasses. In addition, nearly 90 percent received operating loans or home improvement loans from FHA in 1970.

One result of inter-agency cooperation is noted in Table 20. First, conservation payments enabled participants to increase the number of acres in improved pasture eightfold from 1968 to 1970. Second, increases in improved pasture acreages and FHA operating loans enabled participants to expand herd sizes by more than 20 percent. Third, a combination of better grass for grazing and better bulls for breeding helped participants to increase the calf-crop percentage by 15 percent. Finally, an expansion in herd size and an increase in calf-crop percentages helped increase livestock income by 55 percent.

The Program Aide and participants cooperating in Texas IFPP in Starr County are Mexican-Americans. Most participants understand little English, thus interviews conducted by the research team with participants were usually in Spanish.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A major purpose of the Texas Intensified Farm Planning Program was to demonstrate the effectiveness of local farmers employed as Program Aides in Cooperative Extension education for small-farm operators on an intensive basis. This approach was based on the assumption that farmers who live in the community and are in the lower income level should have more effective communication with small-farm operators than professional Agricultural Extension agents, and thus may be more effective in bringing about recommended changes.

It was postulated that certain activities performed by Program Aides could hasten the socioeconomic development of those participating in the Texas IFPP. Activities of Program Aides were separated from activities involving program support so that effectiveness of Program Aides could be determined.

PROGRAM AIDE ACTIVITIES

Change in Perceptions

One of the primary purposes of personal visits by Program Aides was to create awareness of the different types of assistance available to farmers participating in the Texas IFPP. An increased awareness of different types of assistance which are available and which can contribute to socioeconomic development of the participants would be expected to strengthen perceptions of participants of the services offered by the Extension Service

Findings of a self-anchoring scale used to determine perceptions of participants of the Texas Agricultural Extension Service indicated that about a fourth of the participants interviewed rated the assistance provided by Extension Service for the period of five years ago above eight on a ten-point scale. In contrast, nearly twice as many (47 percent) rated Extension assistance below two for the same period. After one year in Texas IFPP (the present period) half of those interviewed rated Extension assistance above eight out of a possible ten while only about a tenth rated Extension assistance below two. In reference to future expectations, nearly three-fourths of those interviewed expected the assistance provided five years hence to be above eight while less than three percent expected future assistance to be below two on a ten-point scale.

Based on results of the self-anchoring scale and field observations by the research team, it was concluded that Program Aides helped to strengthen perceptions of most participants in the Texas IFPP of the services offered by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. It was also concluded that where perceptions were not strengthened, participants were not made adequately aware of the opportunities of assistance specifically for them. Thus, if Program Aides are to be effective, they must demonstrate how the Extension Service can resolve specific problems for farmers in the lower income levels.

Acceptance of Educational Assistance

The second Program Aide activity involved increasing the levels of acceptance of educational assistance of Extension Service and of assistance programs offered by selected USDA agencies. Analysis of data presented in Chapter IV revealed that while only a limited number of participants attended Extension meetings in 1968, nearly a fourth of the participants attended scheduled meetings planned by Extension Service in 1970. Others may have attended Extension meetings but attendance records were not available to support additional comparisons for previous years. In reference to participation in assistance programs offered by ASCS, FHA and SCS, a distinct increase in participation was found for 1970 from 1968. In addition, considerable evidence indicated that inter-agency cooperation was being developed and pursued by many counties involved in the program.

It was found that Program Aides provided information about assistance programs offered by selected government agricultural agencies to participants which enabled Program Aides to serve as coordinators for the selected USDA

agencies. It was concluded that close cooperation among the different governmental agencies must be obtained if educational programs are to make a significant contribution toward easing the plight of small-farm operators.

Changes in Production

The third Program Aide activity was concerned with changes in production. The major enterprises of participants for 1968 and 1970 for which data were available for analysis were corn, beef cattle and truck crops.

Corn was produced primarily for on-farm livestock consumption. Data indicated that yields were increased by 52 percent from 1968 to 1970 and that increases occurred in the number of participants following recommended practices in land preparation, variety planted, seed planting rates and fertilizer application. Increases in numbers following recommendations may help account for the increase in yield.

Because many different vegetables were planted in small quantities in 1968 and 1970, vegetables were grouped into one category — truck crops — for a more meaningful analysis. Examination of data indicated that an increase in the number of participants following recommended practices in 1970 occurred in each of the recommended practices. Data on vegetable yields for 1968 were not available, thus yield comparisons for 1968 and 1970 were not made.

More than 90 percent of the participants had beef cattle operations in both 1968 and 1970. An examination of data indicated that sizable increases in the proportion of participants following recommended practices occurred in 1970 for all four selected practices. In addition, calf-crop producers increased by five percent in 1970 and 1968.

Based on the findings presented in this report and on field observations, it was concluded that Program Aides played a significant role in encouraging participants to adopt recommended production practices.

Gross Farm Income Changes

One of the ultimate purposes of the Texas IFPP was to increase farm incomes of those participating in the program. Under normal production conditions, the adoption of recommended practices and procedures should help farmers increase farm income.

For this evaluation, farm income was divided into two sources; income from livestock and income from crops. An analysis of the data presented in Chapter IV indicated an increase of almost 25 percent per participant in livestock income and an increase of 0.6 percent for crop income.

Based on data presented and on field observations, it was concluded that Program Aides played a significant role in helping participants increase livestock income by almost 25 percent. However, with the exception of Falls County, Program Aides generally were not able to make significant contributions in row-crop production. As indicated, crop income change was 0.6 percent. Many explanations account for this slight change in crop income. They include:

1. Lack of modern equipment hampered many crop producers.
2. Off-farm employment restricted time available for farming row-crops.
3. Reduction in acreage devoted to crop production.
4. Lack of reliable vegetable markets.
5. Lack of capital available during growing season for purchase of insecticides.
6. Limited supply of labor available for harvesting truck crops.
7. Ineffective communications between Program Aides and participants.
8. Meaningful goals perhaps insufficiently defined to guide recommendations.
9. Inclement weather restrictions.

Evidence indicated that Program Aides were more intensively involved in livestock production. In addition, more external resources were available to livestock producers than were available for row-crop producers. External resources included assistance programs of selected governmental agencies and auction markets for sale of livestock. Few participants were eligible for price-support payments for row-crop production. Most vegetable producers were skeptical about adopting production recommendations because of the absence of a dependable local vegetable market. Thus, if Program Aides are to be more successful in assisting most vegetable producers,

they may have to help establish an outlet for the vegetable producers.

Level of Living

The final process to be examined concerned level of living standards of participants. The analysis revealed a significant difference in the number of participants having hot and cold running water piped into the home in 1970.

Based on findings presented in this paper and on field observation, it was concluded that Program Aides played a major role in helping applicants apply for loans from FHA for new homes and home improvements such as hot and cold running water piped into homes. In most counties, Program Aides and FHA representatives worked closely in trying to upgrade levels of living for county residents through other home improvement loans.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation No. 1

The Texas IFPP has accomplished much within a short time. Increases in farm incomes for participants in four counties were much more than the added cost of the program in those counties. However, it would not be fair to compare participating counties for levels of success because the basis for selection of individuals was different. In some counties, selected participants were unable to follow recommendations because of factors such as poor health, no interest in farming or location so remote as to preclude frequent visits by Program Aides without exceeding appropriated travel allowances. The results were that (1) little production progress was made with them; (2) Program Aides often spent more time with this group than with groups with more potential in agricultural production; and (3) Program Aides became discouraged at the lack of progress being made. It goes without saying, however, that the needs of all must be served. Because the present program is primarily production oriented, it is recommended that additional categories of assistance be presented to serve the needs of a large audience: (1) full production assistance, (2) limited production assistance and (3) nonproduction assistance. This new classification would permit Program Aides to meet the needs of the target audience and would provide opportunities for different types of planning and would probably make for more realistic expectations by Program Aides.

Recommendation No. 2

The selection of the Program Aide is one of the most important aspects of the intensified farm planning approach. He must be able to communicate with the client system and provide information of a specific nature at the proper time in the decision-making process. Program Aides must be recognized as knowledgeable about their work and able to demonstrate how acceptance of recommendations will lead to fulfillment of formulated goals. No credibility gap can exist between participants and Program Aides.

It is recommended that selected Program Aides be well-known in the county, recognized as knowledgeable about a particular enterprise and be able to demonstrate any methods recommended.

Recommendation No. 3

Within the next 2 years, a number of participants in the Texas IFPP will not need intensive assistance. Thus, it is recommended that plans be formulated to insure a smooth transition of participants into ongoing Extension Service programs.

Recommendation No. 4

Because Program Aides are most effective in the field, office work should be restricted. It is recommended that administrative duties be accomplished by others whenever possible.

Recommendation No. 5

Program Aides are most effective when they demonstrate their recommendations. It is recommended that special funds be set aside for purchase of portable equipment to be used with demonstrations.

Recommendation No. 6

Program Aides normally have intensive contact with farm operators in the field. If farm operators are not aware that Program Aides are representative of the Extension Service, participants may tend to not participate in local ongoing Extension Service programs. It is recommended that Program Aides utilize local

Extension offices as much as possible for assistance and that farm operators be aware of this. Perhaps magnetic signs could be attached to personal vehicles when used for Extension business.

Recommendation No. 7

It is recommended that publicity revealing successful case stories be reviewed thoroughly to insure that negative reactions by participants do not occur. Some may wish to have their stories told and others may not.

Recommendation No. 8

It is recommended that Extension Service marketing specialists help evaluate vegetable market potential, determine appropriate market outlets and teach producers more effective methods of marketing vegetables.

Recommendation No. 9

It is recommended that the duties of the coordinator be revised to permit him more time in the field for coordination, individual training sessions and assistance in resolving problem areas.

Recommendation No. 10

This evaluation makes no attempt to compare potential contributions of Program Aides and county Extension staff members. Nor do the findings of this study suggest that intensive visits by county Extension staff members would have different results than those produced by Program Aides. Any success enjoyed by the Texas IFPP is the result of a team effort by both Program Aides and county Extension staffs.

It is recommended that county Extension staffs be involved in providing support for Program Aides and that both Program Aides and county Extension staff members be provided adequate job descriptions concerning their roles in this type of program.

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